

## **Project Summary**

### **Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit**

**Project Title:** Coordination of Peer Review of Inventory and Monitoring Plans  
**Type of Project:** Technical Assistance  
**Funding Agency:** National Park Service  
**Other Partners/Cooperators:** University of Idaho  
**Effective Dates:** 9/1/2004 - 9/1/2005  
**Funding Amount:** \$8,813

**Investigators and Agency Representative:**

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**Project Abstract:**

Objective: Obtain assistance with the coordination of peer reviews of vital signs monitoring plans for networks of national parks. Peer review of the first 12 monitoring plans will occur in January-March 2005.

More than 270 national parks grouped into 32 monitoring networks are in the process of developing integrated monitoring plans to monitor the vital signs of parks. The intent of park vital signs monitoring is to track a subset of physical, chemical, and biological elements and processes of park ecosystems that are selected to represent the overall health or condition of park resources, known or hypothesized effects of stressors, or elements that have important human values. The elements and processes that are monitored are a subset of the total suite of natural resources that park managers are directed to preserve "unimpaired for future generations," including water, air, geological resources, plants and animals, and the various ecological, biological, and physical processes that act on those resources. The broad-based, scientifically sound information obtained through natural resource monitoring will have multiple applications for management decision-making, research, education, and promoting public understanding of park resources.

Draft monitoring plans for the first 12 networks, representing 101 parks, are due on December 15, 2004. During January - March 2005, the National Monitoring Program Leader will coordinate peer reviews by NPS, USGS, and university scientists following guidelines posted at <http://science.nature.nps.gov/im/monitor/docs/MonitoringPlanChecklist.doc>. Monitoring plans and supporting materials are complex, lengthy documents that address long-term monitoring of ecological integrity and high-priority issues in marine, freshwater, and terrestrial ecological systems. The first 12 plans will span the geographic range from Florida to Alaska.

**Outcomes with Completion Dates:**

Draft monitoring plans for the first 12 networks, representing 101 parks, are due on December 15, 2004. Final review comments from 12 experts on the I&M plans are due by March 2005. The end date of the project is September 1, 2005.

**Keywords:** Inventory & Monitoring Program, peer review, monitoring plans, National Park Service, University of Idaho

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Date Annual Report Received:  
Date Final Report Received:  
Publications, etc. on file: